

SafetyAlert

October 2018

Positive Legionella Test

This alert covers the considerations that need to be taken to identify and prevent the possibility of a positive legionella bacteria test arising from the water system at motorway depots.

Incident Description

- Following routine water testing for controlling legionella at a Motorway depot, a positive test was established for legionella bacteria.
- The positive test was confined to the kitchen sink tap in the Archive Building. This is a standalone building and was immediately closed off to all personnel.
- All personnel who had been into the Archive Building over the last month were contacted and the symptoms of Legionnaires explained. They were advised to seek medical help if these symptoms presented themselves.
- A full clean of the water system has taken place. Further water samples were taken prior to and after the clean, to help identify the cause and confirm if the legionella bacteria has been removed from the Archive Building.
- The source hasn't yet been confirmed, but may be attributable to the hot summer which resulted in higher cold water temperatures and the build-up of scale within taps.

Advice and guidance on legionella is available from the HSE website <http://www.hse.gov.uk/legionnaires/>

Actions

- Check there's an adequate legionella risk assessment which identifies the sources of risk in the water system. Ensure the prescribed sampling of water outlets and the maintenance, cleaning and disinfecting of the water system is being carried out as per the risk assessment.
- Always ensure that the flushing of all water outlets is performed every seven days and recorded.
- As part of the depot inspection, check that outlets are scale free, and if required, put in place a de-scale programme.



- Determine if there is a requirement to discuss measures for controlling legionella due to warmer weather and the build-up of scale with your water management contractor.

For further information please contact the National Health and Safety Team via NH&ST@highwaysengland.co.uk